

NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2015 – STATEWIDE POLYCOM

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present

Pat Anderson	Scott Burlingame	Russ Cusack
Tim Davenport	Kirsten Dvorak	Harley Engelman
Vickay Gross	Deborah Jendro	Marshall Longie
Kevin McDonough	Darren Moos	Darcy Severson
Kelly Smeltzer	Sheri Wilson	

Members Absent

Christy Coughlin	Rodney Gillund	Sherry Shirek
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Others Present

Cheryl Hess	Paul Kramer	Robyn Throlson
Rose Grieves, Experience Works		

State Office Staff

Kendra Faa	Kyle Peterson
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Chairman Harley Engelman called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present. Kirsten Dvorak introduced herself.

Agenda

Action: A motion was made by Kevin McDonough and seconded by Pat Anderson to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of October Minutes

Action: A motion was made by Pat Anderson and seconded by Darcy Severson to accept the SRC quarterly minutes from its last meeting on October 21-22, 2014. Motion carried.

Election of Chairperson Elect

Chairman Harley Engelman asked if any members have an interest in becoming Chairperson Elect. Vickay Gross volunteered. No other volunteers.

Action: A motion was made by Tim Davenport and seconded by Pat Anderson to cast a unanimous ballot for Vickay Gross as Chairperson Elect. Motion carried.

Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) Overview/Implications – Russ Cusack

Russ Cusack presented background information on the Vocational Rehabilitation program leading up to the July 22, 2014 signing of WIOA. Although regulations have not been released, the direction from the federal partner is take action now, do not wait for regulations. Following is a brief summary of some key areas of WIOA.

Pre-employment transition services

- DVR is required to use 15% of the federal grant, approximately \$1.5 million on pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, age 14-21. This is a significant change for ND. DVR has read the law, met with key stakeholders, and has a general outline of how these individuals will be served.
- DVR is required to use 50% of the Supported Employment grant, serving individuals with most significant disabilities, on youth with disabilities. The State will match 10% of the 50%.
- Preliminary regulations have been pushed back to late Spring. There can be up to a 90 day comment period. VR could be a full federal fiscal year without regulations.
- Can serve clients and individuals who are potentially eligible.

Competitive integrated employment and sub-minimum wage

- Effective 2016, individuals age 24 and under wanting to work in subminimum wage will have to come to VR first. Individuals will need to have applied for VR services and determined ineligible; or be eligible for VR with an IPE and have worked toward employment outcome for a reasonable amount of time without success before they can accept subminimum wage employment.
- DPI will provide data on the number of students graduating who will be impacted by WIOA and thus referred to VR. This information will be used to assess the impact of provisions included in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- VR and DD will have a grant opportunity for providers to model innovative strategies to assist people currently in sheltered workshops or day habilitation services that want the opportunity for competitive integrated work.
- VR, on behalf of the Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, will contract with Minot State University to complete a survey of individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) currently receiving vocational or day support service. Purpose is to determine the extent of the competitive and integrated nature of those surveyed who work. Information will be gathered to create a baseline of the number of individuals with ID currently served in less than integrated/competitive employment.

Employer Services

- DVR is waiting for regulations to define services to businesses.

- DVR issued an RFP to market a rapid retention program. The intent is to reach individuals currently employed who are having difficulties due to their disability and need help maintaining their employment.

Collaborative partnerships

- Many collaborative partnerships exist including schools, parent education agencies, Medicaid, DD, Job Service, Workforce, etc.
- The state plan will be a unified plan including workforce partners. Due March 2016 effective July 2016. DVR is waiting for regulations but is instructed to begin work on the plan.

DVR Strategic Plan – Robyn Throlson, Planning and Evaluation Administrator

Robyn reviewed the strategic plan for impact due to WIOA. Administrative Code will be amended once regulations are published.

DVR Legislative Update/Budget – Paul Kramer

Paul Kramer provided a brief legislative update for the Department of Human Services. Some highlights include:

- SB2012 includes \$3.6 billion in total funds. This is a little over 20% increase from 13-15 biennium.
- General Fund (state) is \$1.4 billion, which is a 17% increase
- Provider increase of \$48 million (4% and 4% inflator)
- Utilization growth just over \$27 million
- Behavior Health - \$6 million increase

Paul provided an overview of the Optional Adjustment Request (OAR) priority list.

DVR Existing Budget – Lynn Derman

- Lynn indicated the 2015 Federal Fiscal Year started October 1, 2014.
- DVR completely spent the 2013 award less the amount estimated would not be spent
- DVR is on its way to completing the maintenance of effort (MOE) for 2015 grant
- 15% set aside for transition begins with 2015 grant award. These funds can only be spent on transition.

Chairman Harley Engelman requested Lynn provide a written budget report to send to members.

Planning/Evaluation – Pat Anderson

Committee members reviewed the Oct 2013 – Sept 2014 VR Strategic Plan Performance Measures Report. Under #2 VR Employment Services: % of the people who exit VR after receiving planned services who are employed, the goal was 65% and the actual was 63% which exceeds the federal goals of 55.8%. The actual performance has increased over the past 4 years. Due to Order of Selection, VR was at 44.16% in 2013.

The 6 Month Employment Survey results were reviewed and the low response rate in Regions 7 & 8 was questioned. This survey is not federally required. ND VR does this to track outcomes. The individuals in this report were closed successfully and receive follow-up after 6 months. It is difficult to connect with people when they become employed. Staff try several times to reach them, leave voicemail messages – which are not returned or discover that the number they have has been disconnected. The closure letter will be revised to alert the client to the upcoming contacts in hopes that will improve the response rate.

The RFP for the Client Satisfaction Survey will be released late January or early February. The plan is to have a contractor in place by October 1, 2015.

Resource Committee – Sheri Wilson

Sheri reported the committee has reviewed Frank Strom's survey. They continue to research and are looking at tapping into a professor out of Northern Illinois University to gather more information before concluding how to conduct the staff survey.

Membership/Public Relations Committee – Vickay Gross

The committee is tracking members of the council who have completed the SRC training modules. New members will be mentored by a seasoned member.

Vickay will work with Marshall Longie and Kirsten Dvorak to complete the training modules.

Pursuing a Governor's Hiring Directive

President Obama set a standard for hiring individuals with disabilities. Chairman Harley Engelman assigned an ad hoc executive committee made up of the Chairman, Chairman Elect, Past Chairman, and the three committee Chairs to look at potentially defining a Governor's hiring goal. This would coordinate with Veteran's Returning to Employment (VRE). The committee will bring ideas back to the Council.

Russ Cusack will begin the conversation with the DHS HR Director.

Next meeting April 23-24, 2015.

Meeting adjourned.